



Happy New Year from *The Lark Bunting*! A new mid-winter issue of the Denver Field Ornithologists newsletter is now on our website at <https://dfobirds.org/News/LB.pdf>. Inside you'll find:

+ SMASHING YEAR: Our field trip program broke records in 2022, averaging more than 20 outings a month and nearly five a week. Can we top that in 2023? Read more about 2022's species counts, busiest DFO counties, and the "frequent flier" who went on way more trips than anyone . . .

+ HERE COME THE RAPTORS: Spring migration *already*? On March 1, less than two months away, DFO's Hawk Watch begins counting northbound birds of prey from atop Dinosaur Ridge in Jefferson County. Volunteer orientation, an expert raptor ID webinar and a pre-count field trip are all coming soon. Check out the details, register now and become a volunteer . . .

+ A WILD CITY PARK GOOSE TALE: If you've ever birded in Denver City Park, you've probably seen one or two huge, orange-billed domestic geese cruising the waters of Duck Lake. What's their story? How'd they get there? On a recent park visit, *The Lark Bunting's* editor stumbled across the one with all the answers — and what a story she tells . . .

+ SPEAKING OF GEESE: Tens of thousands of Canada and Cackling Geese are wintering across greater Denver right now. But only decades ago they were disappearing from North America — until "Wild Goose Jack" helped save the day. **Tom Wilberding** shares a boyhood memory from the refuge Jack built . . .

+ PLUS: What's in a bird's name? **Jared Del Rosso** explores the amazing lexicon of Nightjars and Goatsuckers . . . **Jill Boice** reviews the first in a fun series of "Birder Murder" mysteries with a sleuth whose birding knowledge helps solve crimes . . . and previews of four winter-spring DFO evening programs and plenty more DFO news, views and photos.

Next month is our mid-winter break. Look for *The Lark Bunting* to return in March. Until then, good winter birding!

Denver Field Ornithologists

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To our DFO Members and Followers -- please share this email freely! As Avian Flu rampages through the bird community, let's be mindful that we each have the power & opportunity to help reduce its spread. Below is a brief message from DFO member Courtney Rella, Ph.D. With gratitude to Courtney and each of you,

Susan Blansett, DFO President

Reporting dead birds:

Because HPAI (highly pathogenic avian flu) is so rampant right now, reporting dead birds to Colorado Parks and Wildlife is critical. If you see dead waterfowl and/or raptors in your travels, contact the appropriate regional CPW office to report it. CPW will come out if there are three or more dead birds (any species) seen within 48 hours. If it's a raptor, they will come out even when it's one. A good approach would be to obtain the GPS coordinates along with providing the site for the dead being so that it's easier for CPW to locate.

Reminder: do not approach or touch sick or dead birds. The folks obtaining the birds have appropriate personal protective equipment and qualifications through CPW to do the retrieval.

CPW Regional Contact Numbers:

<https://tinyurl.com/2479p3em>

As birders, we can drastically improve the safety of our birds, since we spend so much time observing the birds around us. It just requires a phone call to get CPW involved when we see dead carcasses. Perhaps a brief interview with someone from CPW will also enhance the post, but this is the most simplified way for us to help that I have determined in my time of Birding and trying to do what I can to decrease the spread.

I am also super happy to help with getting any additional information that you would like to get this communicated. All of us share the passion to protect our

birds, and we definitely don't want to see flu-induced death continuing.

Thank you,

Courtney

Courtney Rella, PhD

dr.cawtney@gmail.com

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

January 2023

NEW — Programs and other events coming VERY SOON.

January 23, THIS MONDAY, 7:00 PM: Cranes — Critical Ambassadors for Conservation.

Cranes are among the most loved and revered birds on earth. Tall, stately and heart-stoppingly charismatic, they are nonetheless also among the most endangered families of birds. Eleven of the globe's 15 species are threatened or endangered, and our own North American examples reflect both the plentiful (Sandhill) and the few (Whooping).

DFO's first evening program of 2023 features Rich Beilfuss, who will explore the role of cranes as ambassadors and flagships for conservation. The International Crane Foundation's focus on conservation of North America's endangered Whooping Crane population is featured in a 14-minute video, [Cranes: Symbols of Survival](#), narrated by longtime NBC News anchor, Tom Brokaw.

Please [register for this webinar today](#) on Zoom.

DUE — Upcoming field trips

Here is a partial list of upcoming field trips. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page soon to discover additional trips and sign up while space is still available.

- Bluff Lake Nature Center. (Developing Birder Trip). Fri, Jan 27 from 7:15 - 9:00 AM.
- Littleton (Developing Birder Trip). Fri, Jan 27, from 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

DÉJÀ VU — Recent items for renewed awareness

Did you remember to [renew your DFO membership](#)?

Dinosaur Ridge Hawk Watch. Now is the time to consider helping with DFO's spring count of migrating birds of prey. [Dinosaur Ridge Hawk Watch](#) (Mar 1 - May 14) works with the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) to count migrating hawks, eagles, falcons and other raptors each spring. This vital community science project not only tallies bird numbers — it also teaches participants how to identify these magnificent birds of prey. Birders of all skill levels are welcome to participate.

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Upcoming Programs

DFO has two Zoom webinars in the coming week that you will not want to miss. There is still time to register by going to the [Upcoming Programs](#) page of the DFO website.



Monday, February 27 at 7 pm

Greater Sage Grouse: largest conservation effort in US history

Join Daly Edmunds, director of policy and outreach from Audubon of the Rockies to hear about the organization's Sagebrush Ecosystem Initiative that seeks to conserve the high, dry western habitat on which 350 species, including the Greater Sagegrouse, depend.



Wednesday, March 1 at 6:30 pm

Hawks on the Wing: seeing beyond the field marks with flight-based identification

Join nationally known photographer, videographer, and educator Josh Haas and build your hawk identification skills. Haas' presentation will include videos of hawk species seen on Dinosaur Ridge during migration.

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With spring getting close, the next Denver Field Ornithologists newsletter includes a tribute to those rare winter visitors soon to depart. This month *The Lark Bunting* celebrates those countless Bohemian Waxwings that have delighted Front Range birders since Christmas. Check out our “Bohemian WAX-sody” and much more at <https://dfobirds.org/News/LB.pdf>. Highlights:

+ Waxwingding!: Besides gorgeous cover and back-page images of Bohemians, read **David Suddjian**’s appreciation of their widespread visitation and **Gregg Goodrich**’s account of counting hundreds and hundreds via a tried-and-true geometric trick

+ Fab-ruary: In the depths of winter, DFO pulled off the improbable — 26 field trips in 28 days in our shortest month. Check out Suddjian’s rundown of a month to remember, from a four-trip Super Bowl Weekend to a “Little Big Week” of seven straight outings

+ Conservation: For years, birders have been welcome anytime at Chico Basin Ranch, the incomparable hotspot southeast of Colorado Springs. In 2025, that will end. Is 10 weeks a year the drastically reduced fate of Chico Basin birding? Read **Patrick O’Driscoll**’s sobering update

+ Have birds? We’ll travel: Book reviewer **Jill Boice** has delved into four good books that offer inspiration and dream-making travel ideas, whether by air, land and sea — or from your favorite armchair at home

+ Conservation II: Will a defunct Denver golf course live on as a precious patch of urban open space? Or will it be a neighborhood of mid-rise housing, retail and a park to be named later? Denver voters go to the polls April 4 to help decide. **Mike Fernandez** outlines what’s at stake

Plus: New “Bird Bombs” mini-webinars on bird ID, the start of spring Hawk Watch, volunteer opportunities for club members, spring program previews and

reviews, and a proposal to expand DFO trips to the Pikes Peak region in partnership with Aiken Audubon of Colorado Springs.

So, get reading — and get ready for spring. Good end-of-winter birding, everyone!

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

March 2023

NEW — Upcoming programs

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

- **How Historical Redlining Led Denver's Cooper's Hawks to Live Where They Do. Monthly Program: Monday, March 27, 7:00 PM.** Alyssa Davidge, the Denver raptor biologist who will present March's provocatively titled program, finds it no coincidence that those places are neighborhoods intentionally favored by the historically segregationist "redlining" housing policies that date to the 1930s. Read more and sign up from the article in the April Lark Bunting, (page 10).
- **Hawkwatch Raptorthon, Apr 15.** The Hawk Watch volunteer cadre at Dinosaur Ridge is in mid season spotting migrating Raptors. We also have a team in a national "Raptorthon" to benefit both local and national observation and data gathering efforts for migrating birds of prey. The Denver Raptorthon team, dubbed "Riley & Mile High Raptors," seeks your tax-deductible donations of any amount. The contributions will be split 50-50 between the DFO-led Hawk Watch and its national partner, Hawk Migration Association of North American. More information about the Riley & Mile High Raptors team and how to participate and donate to the cause, stay tuned for the upcoming Lark Bunting DFO newsletter.

DUE — Upcoming field trips and more

Here is a partial list of upcoming field trips. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page soon to discover additional trips and sign up while space is still available.

- **Field Trips.** Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page soon. They fill up fast.
 - Pella Crossing Open Space (Bird Song Focus). Fri, Mar 24, 7:00-11:00 AM
 - Genesee Park. Fri, Mar 24, 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM*
 - Roxborough State Park. Fri, Mar 24, 7:00-11:00 AM*
 - Cañon City, Sat Mar 25, 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM*
 - South Platte Park (Developing Birder Trip), Sat, Mar 25, 2:00-5:00 PM*
 - Northeastern Colorado, Sun, Mar 26, 6:00 AM - 5:00 PM*
 - St. Vrain State Park, Sun, Mar 26, 7:30-11:30 AM
 - Ken Caryl Valley Area (Developing Birder Trip), Wed, Mar 29, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
 - Red Rocks Park, Thu, Mar 30, 8:00-11:00 AM
 - Bluff Lake Nature Center (Developing Birder Trip), Fri, Mar 31

* Wait listed

- **Bird Bombs.**

- [Spring Swallows](#). Identification of our nesting swallows. Webinar on Wed, Apr 13 at 7:00 PM

DÉJÀ VU — Recent items for renewed awareness

- **Last chance to renew your DFO membership.** Renew now to avoid being removed from the member mailing list. Go to the [Membership page](#). The benefits of membership are outlined there. While on the DFO site, please consider supporting DFO with a gift to one of our dedicated funds. You can read about your options for donating to specific causes for birds on our website
- [Welcome to new DFO members](#). And thank you for your contributions. ([The Lark Bunting, page 25](#)).

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Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of DFO meets quarterly for the governance of the organization. All board members are volunteers and members of DFO in good standing. In February 2021, the DFO Board voted to conduct elections via email using a digital ballot. Please complete your ballot by April 21 at 6pm. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mary Geder at mfg5000@live.com

[Click here to vote](#)

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Spring's first migrants are coming through . . . and so is the new issue of the Denver Field Ornithologists newsletter, *The Lark Bunting*. Our May 2023 issue is now available on the DFO website at <https://dfobirds.org/DFO/LarkBunting.aspx>. Inside you'll find:

+ BIRD BOMBS still exploding: DFO's popular series of mini-webinars via Zoom marks its first year in mid-April, and there are more to come. We Q&A with the creator of these bird-ID tutorials, DFO Field Trip chair **David Suddjian**, and an anonymous DFO'er who goes by *nom de plume* "Little Wing" reviews the best of BB Year One

+ Election time: Read about the eight volunteers who've agreed to serve as officers and directors in DFO's annual April election, and then cast your vote online with ballot links that should arrive in members' email a couple of days after this issue is published

+ Salute to Mary Cay: After more than 20 years of service to DFO, from field trips and the club presidency to giveaway-librarian and the thankless task of Membership chair, longtime member **Mary Cay Burger** is stepping down from those and from the DFO Board. We remember her many highlights

+ Last Word, Last Look: A sharp photo essay from member **Melody Serra** of pretty city birds in the middle of the noise, the hubbub, and the . . . razor wire? . . . all encountered on a DFO field trip in March

Plus: A swan-song column from DFO's outgoing president **Susan Blansett** . . . a sneak peek at our first autumn 2023 monthly program, a special evening with

legendary photographer of wild Colorado landscapes, **John Fielder** . . . a winter program review and a flock of more news and details.

Good spring birding, everyone!

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Annual Election of DFO Directors and Officers

Greetings DFO Members, It is time once again for the annual election of DFO board members and officers. The DFO Board of Directors meets quarterly and is tasked with governance of the organization. All nominated board members are volunteers and members of DFO in good standing. Please complete your ballot by April 21 at 6pm. To learn more about the candidates, check out the current issue of The Lark Bunting on the DFO website. If you have any questions or concerns, contact Mary Geder at mfg5000@live.com. Thank you for your participation! Mary Geder, Chair Nominating Committee

[Click here to begin voting](#)

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OOPS, we made a mistake when creating the webinar for the next program meeting. It's not on Sunday, April 23; it Monday April 24th. Please correct your calendars. The link you received for the Zoom meeting will still work. See you then.

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

April 2023

NEW — Upcoming programs

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

April 24, 7:00 PM, Monthly Webinar Program — Birdsong and Habitats: Updates from DFO-funded Avian Research ([REGISTER](#)).

Leah Crenshaw and Olivia Taylor have been studying birdsong in Colorado, but in different birds in very different habitats: Western Meadowlarks in the Pawnee National Grasslands and Chickadees in canyons above Boulder. Crenshaw and Taylor are two of six recipients of DFO's 2022 avian research grants.

Crenshaw's work seeks to provide new insights into what forces underpin population changes in grassland birds to improve conservation of those in Colorado (against the backdrop that three-quarters of North American grassland bird species are in decline). Taylor's hypothesis: With lack of exposure to outside individual birds and less "cultural flow," the songs of populations isolated by canyons will diverge, and divergence will increase with distance between those populations.

May 4, 7:00 PM, Bird Bomb: It's a Flycatcher ([REGISTER](#))

DUE — Upcoming field trips

DUE. Reminders for opportunities to join DFO activities.

DFO board and officer voting is still open to members. We sent an email to all DFO members on April 8 with a link to the voting page for the annual election of DFO board members and officers. Please complete your ballot by Friday, April 21, 6 PM. To learn more about the candidates, check out the current issue of [The Lark Bunting](#) (pg. 12) on the DFO website.

Raptorthon: The fundraiser to benefit DFO's Hawk Watch and other Hawk Watch organizations has raised approximately \$750 to date. Last year we raised about \$1000. We're still tallying our bird count data from various observers, but so far we have 44 non Raptors and 14 Raptors. Donation deadline is May 31. Learn more at our [HMANA site](#).

Field Trips: A sample of trips coming up soon. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page for more information and to register. These fill up fast.

- Wed, Apr 19, 5:55 AM: Chatfield State Park
- Wed, Apr 19, 8:00 AM: Bar CCC
- Thu, Apr 20, 9:00 AM: Southwest Metro Area
- Fri, Apr 21, 9:00 AM: Dinosaur Ridge

- Sat, Apr 22, 6:00 AM: Park County
- Sun, Apr 23, 6:00 AM: Pawnee National Grasslands (Weld County)
- Wed, Apr 26, 5:45 AM: Chatfield State Park

... [And the list goes on...](#)

DÉJÀ VU — Recent items for renewed awareness

FROM THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, DFO friends... and welcome, new ones. In this, my last “From the President” message, I send well-deserved thanks to every volunteer member of every committee and team effort. DFO is home to many talented people, and whatever your skill or expertise, we probably can use it. Don’t be shy. Join us, challenge us, teach us. Help expand our idea of what DFO can be.

I WILL see you in the field! — Susan Blansett

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Here they come, DFO birders: It's peak month for spring migration! And here comes the new issue of the Denver Field Ornithologists newsletter, *The Lark Bunting*, now available on the DFO website at <https://dfobirds.org/DFO/LarkB...> The June 2023 issue has plenty of spring birds, starting with a colorful painting of a Lazuli Bunting on the cover. More of DFO member and artist Joe Chen's Chinese ink paintings of returning birds are inside, along with these stories and more:

+ Birding whichever way you like: In her first "From the President" column, DFO's new birder-in-chief, Sharon Tinianow, extols the joys of casual birding, but with shout-outs to the many paths we take to enjoy our shared pastime. "The great thing about Denver Field Ornithologists is that our club has room for every kind of birder," she writes. "Besides, I'm betting none of us is just one kind of birder or other"

+ Sage-Grouse in Gunnison: Bundle up and re-live in words and pictures the early-morning April encounter that a small DFO group had at the mating lek with Gunnison's Sage-Grouse, that uncommon member of the sage-grouse family native to south-central Colorado's ranch country

+ Hawk Watch fire no joke: Around April Fool's Day, wildfire flames nearly overran DFO's Dinosaur Ridge observation post for the Hawk Watch spring raptor count. Mike Fernandez recounts what happened and how the Hogback Fire affected an already-busy season tracking the return of birds of prey along the Front Range

Plus: A discouraging update on what the Colorado State Land Board has in mind for birders who want to visit Chico Basin Ranch after next year . . . an uplifting review of *Slow Birding* by our book reviewer Jill Boice . . . a sobering status report on avian influenza in Colorado and why we should keep our guard up even if the epidemic starts to recede with summer weather . . . and plenty more DFO news and views.

Good peak spring birding, everyone!

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Dear DFO Volunteers

Thank you for your dedication!

— You Are Invited —

DFO VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION EVENT

Please come celebrate with your fellow volunteers

Sunday, June 4, 2023
8:30 - 11:00 AM

Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR, Visitor Center

DFO runs on volunteer power!

The DFO Board of Directors invites you to join us in appreciation of your volunteer work. This event is free and open to DFO members only.

PROGRAM

8:30 AM - Light Breakfast

9:00 AM - Volunteer Awards Program

10:00 AM - Nature's Educators Owls Program, featuring live owls from their bird rehabilitation program.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Sharon Tinianow, DFO President

To register (required):

Sign up on the [DFO website](#) before Thursday, June 1

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

May 2023

NEW — Upcoming programs and other events

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

- Jun 4, 9-11 AM: DFO Volunteer Appreciation Day at Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR. Open only to DFO members; free admission; features a light breakfast and a program with live owls from Nature's Educators. [Register](#) by Friday, June 2.
- Jun 22, 07:00 PM, Bird Bomb: Prairie Sparrows. Description: Identification of Colorado grassland sparrows. [Register](#).
- Jul 20, 07:00 PM, Bird Bomb: I'm Molting! Description: Learn the basics of feather molt: why, what and when. [Register](#).

BIRD BOMBS: Short webinars of bird identification information designed to help you be a better birder. They drop about twice a month and are free and open to the public. You can watch [Bird Bomb recordings](#) on the Past Programs page.

DFO PROGRAMS: DFO presents webinar programs on the fourth Monday of the month from August through November and January through April (but not in May, June and July). Featured speakers include avian researchers, birding tour guides, bird conservationists, and other birding-related experts. Programs are described in detail in each issue of The Lark Bunting and videos of each program are posted to the [Past Programs](#) page of this website.

DUE — Upcoming field trips

Here is a partial list of upcoming field trips. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page soon to discover additional trips and sign up while space is still available.

- Huerfano County and Maxwell NWR, New Mexico - Saturday, June 3
- Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR - Sunday, June 4
- Red Rocks Park - Monday, June 5
- Skunk Canyon - Monday, June 5
- Tamarack State Wildlife Area and Associated Prairie - Thursday, June 8
- Jefferson County Hotspots: South Platte to the Mountains - Saturday, June 10
- White Ranch Park (West) (Jeffco Open Space) - Saturday, June 10
- Mt Lindo Cemetery and Turkey Creek Park - Sunday, June 11

...[And the list goes on...](#)

FROM THE PRESIDENT (June 2023, pg. 5): DFO's new birder-in-chief: How do we love birding? Let us count the ways. Hello, DFO! I hope you are enjoying spring birding wherever you are. As I step in as president for our truly remarkable organization, I'm thinking about the ways we are birders, and how we complement one another. There may be nearly as many ways to be a birder as there are birds...

Could there be anything better than being in this place with all of you, who appreciate its beauty so completely? That is how I feel at the end of any birding trip, every birding trip. I wish the same for all of you. So, let's get out there.

Happy birding, one and all! — Sharon Tinianow

Denver Field Ornithologists

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Dear DFO member – I am so glad you will be attending the Volunteer Recognition Event at Rocky Mountain Arsenal this Sunday, June 4. There was an error on the email invitation about the start time of the event. It actually starts at 9:00 AM.

The event will be held inside the visitor center. Here is a google map to the site: <https://goo.gl/maps/NzFQ62g898p9bVDU8?coh=178573&entry=tt>

Just click on directions and put your location in the starting location box.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Sharon Tinianow
President
DFO Board of Directors

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It's summer, DFO birders! Time for our mid-season break from monthly programs. But before we go, here's the July-August double issue of the Denver Field Ornithologists newsletter, *The Lark Bunting*, now available on the DFO website at <https://dfobirds.org/DFO/LarkBunting.aspx#gsc.tab=0>. Highlights:

+ **Better birding skills:** In addition to our monthly "BIRD BOMBS" mini-webinars, DFO's longer, skills-centered workshops return with "Bird Habitats of the Front Range" in July. Read more and sign up! . . .

+ **In the room? Or Zoom?:** The COVID-19 pandemic sent DFO programs and meetings into the online zone. Is a return to in-person gatherings on your mind? In her "From the President" column, **Sharon Tinianow** reviews how we got here, lists pros and cons of both ways to "meet," and asks for YOUR opinion . . .

+ **Celebrating DFO volunteers:** A review in words and pictures of DFO Volunteer Appreciation Day, one of the club's first in-person gatherings since we exited the pandemic, with food, fellowship, old friends and new awards . .

+ **Plus:** DFO research/science \$\$ at work with chickadees . . Hawk Watch 2023 review . . Chico Basin birding update (yes, but) . . Nesting season photo gallery . . and plenty more!

Good summer birding, everyone!

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We value your feedback.

DFO is always looking for ideas for monthly program speakers. Please take a few minutes to answer this short survey. The survey will be open through July 1.

Thanks!

[Begin](#)

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

July 2023

NEW — Upcoming programs

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

- **Bird Bombs: I'm Molting!** Thu, Jul 20, 7 PM. Learn the basics of feather molt: why, what and when. [Webinar Registration.](#)
- **Bird Habitats of the Front Range (DFO skills workshops return).** Thu, Jul 27, 7:00-8:30 PM. Read the preview of this event in [The Lark Bunting](#) (Jul-Aug edition, pg 9). This workshop will be online and aims to help you to identify bird species in the field through a deeper understanding of the habitats they encounter. The workshop is geared towards developing birders.
- **Bird Bombs: Falling for Warblers.** Thu, Aug 17, 7 PM. Identification of Colorado's fall migrant warblers. [Webinar Registration.](#)
- **John Fielder: Changing Colorado Landscapes, 1973-2023.** Mon, Aug 28, 7 PM. Check out the preview of this program in [The Lark Bunting](#) (Jul-Aug edition, pg 10) and use the link there to register.

DUE — Upcoming field trips

Here is a partial list of upcoming field trips. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page soon to discover additional trips and sign up while space is available.

- [Ken Caryl Valley Area.](#) Sun, Jul 16, 7:00 AM - 10:30 AM. a short weekend outing at private open space areas of Ken Caryl Ranch. We will visit a few spots looking for summer nesting species of the hogbacks and the lower foothills, exploring grassland, scrub and riparian habitats. Plan for about 2 miles of walking at 2-3 locations with mostly easy terrain.
- [Deer Creek Canyon Open Space Park](#) (Developing Birder Trip). Tue, Jul 18, 6:30 to 10:00 AM. A short hike up and back along Meadowlark Trail (no bikes) in the cooler morning, This trail has been very birdy this month with lots of buntings, chats, towhees and more. There may be lots of baby birds out, and the wildflowers still are going strong.
- [Washington Park.](#) Thu, Jul 20, 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM. Washington Park is completely car-free and paved, which allows travel by wheelchair through the entire park. Some recent birds include a Black-crowned Night-Heron, Snowy Egret, and Northern Flickers
- [Park County Explorations.](#) Mon, Jul 24, 5:30 AM to 4:00 PM. We will visit Kite Lake in search of White-tailed Ptarmigan, Brown-capped Rosy-Finch, American Pipit and other high elevation species. This will take us to 12,400 feet and some moderately strenuous (but slow paced) hiking for up to 2 miles.

- [Lake County](#). Thu, Jul 27, 5:30 AM to 6:00 PM. Meet for carpooling in Jeffco at the Stegosaurus parking lot, south of I-70, exit 259. Drive under the freeway to the second left turn. The parking lot is at the base of the Hogback, near the Hawk Watch location. We will explore Lake County, Leadville area, Leadville Fish Hatchery and end at Twin Lakes.

DÉJÀ VU — Items for renewed awareness from recent Lark Bunting newsletters.

Safe at home . . . and gone too soon. Enjoy these visual moments of nesting season from fellow DFO photographers. The Lark Bunting (Jul-Aug edition, pg 22),

FYI. Did you know that DFO members have online access to inside information about the DFO organization? [Visit the DFO website](#), then simply log in to your membership account, select the MENU tab, go to Members Only, and select DFO Business. You'll find board meeting minutes, financial statements, and any other information that the DFO board of directors shares with its membership.

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We're back from summer vacay, DFO birders! Have we got a September issue of *The Lark Bunting* newsletter for you: it's the biggest ever (33 pages), packed with 20+ photos from an epic DFO field trip and more news, memories and useful info. It's now available on the DFO website at https://dfobirds.org/LB/2023/09_Sep_2023_LB.pdf.

Highlights:

+ **Sky Islands odyssey:** Longtime trip leader **Joey Kellner** recaps DFO's 12-day excursion to Southeast Arizona's best desert-to-mountaintop birding destinations (87 eBird lists! 191 species!), with superb images from three DFO photographers

+ **Fall program lineup:** From Colorado to Texas to the Everglades, our monthly evening programs via Zoom are set through November: Colorado nature writer **Mary Taylor Young**'s climate-change journal, DFO ex-president **Tamie Bulow**'s guide to birding the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and Audubon activists **Lauren Jonaitis** and **Stephanie Clements** on the Everglades and its wildlife. Read the previews and register to attend them all!

+ **Tributes to DFO friends:** In words and pictures, we remember the lives of two club stalwarts from different eras: eternally smiling 1960s president and trip leader **Patty Echelmeyer**, and 21st-century friend, volunteer and lover of people and birds **Allison Hilf**

+ **Plus:** Member **Doug Ward**'s 50th anniversary reliving of his first boyhood DFO field trip with the man who led it, Colorado birding legend **Hugh Kingery** . . . the

virtues of summer backyard birdwatching . . . another record DFO month for field trips . . . and so much more . . .

Good end-of-summer birding, everyone!

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

August 2023

New. Programs and Events coming soon

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

Monthly Program — Bluebird Seasons: Witnessing Climate Change in My Piece of the Wild, by Mary Taylor Young

Monday, August 28, 7 pm. [Register for the webinar.](#)

Mary Taylor Young built a cabin in the southern Rockies in 1995 with a sunrise view of Fishers Peak (now one of Colorado's newest state parks). She set up a trail of bluebird nest boxes. And she began a nature journal. Now, looking back over 25 years, things changed. Familiar birds were seen less often. New species expanded their ranges from the south. Evidence of the changing climate is woven through decades of journal entries.

Bird Bombs: It's Probably a Red-tailed

Sep 14, Thu, 7:00 PM. Identification of a key Colorado reference species.

[Register for the webinar.](#)

Archives

Remember to check out the past Monthly Programs and Bird Bombs you may have missed by visiting the [Past Programs](#) page.

Program Notice:

We have canceled the DFO monthly program scheduled for October 23 and are seeking a presenter for that date. Please watch for the next issue of The Lark Bunting for an update.

DUE. Reminders for opportunities to join DFO activities.

Field Trips: Here is a sampling of upcoming field trips. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page soon to discover additional trips and sign up while space is still available.

- **[Spruce Mountain Open Space \(Douglas County\).](#)**

Fri, Aug 25, 6:30 AM - 1:00 PM.

Warbling and Plumbeous Vireo, Western Tanager, Western Bluebird, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Lesser Goldfinch all breed in this area. We will carpool from our meeting spot, driving 20 miles to the south to the parking lot for Spruce Mountain Open Space. From there, we will hike up several hundred feet to the top of Spruce Mountain (a flat-top mesa), hike to the west through pines, and drop off the mesa to hike back through oak scrub and some grasslands. Our hike should be about 5 miles in length.

- [Northeastern Colorado.](#)

Sun, Aug 27, 5:30 AM - 7:00 PM.

Trip Difficulty: Strenuous. Meet at Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N. Broadway. We'll start at Prewitt Reservoir looking for migrant land birds and shorebirds. After lunch we will depart for Jackson Reservoir via dirt back roads and again search for migrant birds.

- [Park County Explorations.](#)

Mon, Aug 28, 6:00 AM - 6:00 PM.

This full day trip will look for migrant shorebirds and land birds in the southern part of Park County, including visits to Lake George and Antero Reservoir and maybe one of the others, as well as grassland, riparian and pine forest in between.

- [Pawnee National Grasslands \(Weld County\).](#)

Sat, Sep 2, 5:30 AM - 12:00 PM.

We should see some early migrants passing through various locations on the Pawnee. We will plan to visit Murphy's Pasture (maybe Cassins and Grasshopper Sparrow), and Norma's Grove (this is in the shade with water in the creek).

DÉJÀ VU — Recent items for renewed awareness

- **DFO Member Longevity.**

Did you know the Denver Field Ornithologists website keeps tabs on how long you've been a member? Congrats to Hugh Kingery and other longtime DFO'ers. Our [Membership Longevity](#) webpage displays, year by year, the enduring membership of everyone who's been in DFO for 10 years or more. See this year's five-year increment highlights in [The Lark Bunting](#), page 26.

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Fall migration is under way, DFO birders. And here comes a Lark Bunting — or, rather, *THE Lark Bunting*, the newsletter of Denver Field Ornithologists. The October 2023 issue is now available on the DFO website at https://dfobirds.org/LB/2023/10_Oct_2023_LB.pdf. Inside, you'll find plenty of bird news, views and photos, including:

+ “I’m just a kid that likes birds”: Meet the pre-teen birder who in his first year is doing a home-state big year (nearly 300 species already), creating an online field guide to the state’s species, chasing Colorado rarities, and has hosted dozens of visitors to a winter rarity in his backyard. “When he likes something, he really **LIKES** it,” says his mom. *Birding boy wonder, page 18*

+ State to halt open birding at Chico Basin this winter: Severe annual limits of just 10 total weeks of half-day birding apparently aren’t draconian enough for the State Land Board staff. It will shaft birders at Chico Basin Ranch further this winter by ending anytime daily access to this great birding hotspot almost one year sooner than announced. Your last chance to visit unconstrained by petty, needless bureaucracy is Feb. 29, 2024. *Discouraging words, page 16*

+ Field Trips in Focus: Celebrate not just the birds on DFO field trips but also you and your fellow birders. This new feature includes photos of DFO birders birding. We’re aiming for one shot from each DFO outing. *Making it snappy, page 14*

Plus: *From the President* sorts through the latest sad, bad and glad headlines about birds and conservation . . . new programs are upcoming, from a *BIRD BOMBS* bird ID mini-webinar on hawks to a deep dive into the 11 owl species found in northern Colorado . . . view a 12-photo gallery of fall migrant birds in Colorado . . . and plenty more DFO news and views.

Good fall migration birding, everyone!

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

September 2023

NEW — Monthly Programs and upcoming events

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

MONTHLY PROGRAM — Owls of Northern Colorado, by Scott Rashid of Colorado Avian Research & Rehab Institute

Monday, September 18, 7 p.m. MDT. [Register for the webinar](#).

Whoohoo knew that 11 of the 19 species of owl found in the US occur in northern Colorado. Who else but Scott Rashid, the veteran Colorado owl researcher, bander, rehabilitator and painter. Rashid may know them better than anyone in the state, having worked with owls here for more than 30 years. Besides his field research, Rashid has been painting, illustrating and writing about birds for nearly 35 years. His unique painting style combines Cubism and Realism; his Cubist side shows multiple views of his subjects in each painting, plus his Realist side seeks to make them identifiable.

His books: *Small Mountain Owls*; *The Great Horned Owl: An In-depth Study*; *Northern Goshawk, the Gray Ghost: Habits, Habitat, and Rehabilitation*, and *Exploring the World of the Barn Owl: (An intimate look into their secretive lives)*.

Bird Bombs: Colorado Sea Ducks

Oct 19, Thu, 7:00 p.m. MDT. Identification of our scoters and other ocean ducks. [Register for the webinar](#).

Follow-up notice:

We have an update to our previous notice about cancelling the monthly program scheduled for October 23. DFO will present Water Flows Together: Opportunities for Birds and People in 2023, by Abby Burk, Audubon Rockies. Visit the DFO [Upcoming Programs](#) page to register.

DUE — Reminders for opportunities to join DFO activities

Field Trips: A sample of trips coming up soon. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page for more information and additional upcoming field trips. These fill up fast.

- [Aurora's Red-tailed Hawk Park and nearby trails \(Developing Birder Trip\)](#) — **Fri, Sep 22, 7:00 - 10:30 a.m.**

This is a good time for variety. Beginning and newer birders are very welcome. We can talk about how to use the eBird Mobile app or Merlin, and whatever questions you may have. Plan for about 2-3 miles of walking on paved paths.

- [Lair o' the Bear Park \(Jefferson County\)](#) — **Fri, Sep 22, 7:00 - 9:30 a.m.**

We'll look for the resident nuthatches, woodpeckers, dippers, and corvids. We'll also try to find some migrants as they are passing through.

- [Park County Explorations](#) — **Tue, Sep 26, 6:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

This trip will explore the northwestern area of South Park, birding through Ponderosa and mixed conifer forest, aspen, willow corridors, scrub and open grassland. We'll have some amazing vistas in my favorite Colorado county.

- [Cherry Creek State Park \(Arapahoe County\)](#) — **Thu, Sep 28, 7:00 - 11:00 a.m.**

We will explore around the reservoir to look for gulls, waterfowl, and a variety of birds. Habitats include deep water, marshlands, mixed grasses, and cottonwoods.

DÉJÀ VU — Items for renewed awareness from The Lark Bunting newsletters

State to end open access at Chico this winter

Bird-as-you-please access to Chico Basin Ranch will cease before the end of the upcoming winter of 2023-24. Learn more in October's edition of [The Lark Bunting](#), page 16.

Fall migration: "The world moves . . . and we long to move with it"

As their autumn exodus deepens, we present a Colorado gallery of birds on the move or about to depart. Our summer nesters and seasonal residents — as well as out-of-town passers-through who hatched and fledged their young elsewhere — are migrating south before winter descends. Review the photo gallery in October's edition of [The Lark Bunting](#), page 24.

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October 9, 2023

TONIGHT - Belmar Park development plan

Belmar Park, located at 801 S. Wadsworth Bl, is a birding hotspot surrounded by dense development in Lakewood. eBird lists 240 species across 5,561 checklists at that hotspot.

Lakewood City Council is meeting TONIGHT and will take public comment about a planned large development at the park.

At issue is the proposal to replace an office building just outside the east boundary of the park at 777 S. Yarrow St, adjacent to Kountze Lake (which is within the park), with a 412-unit multifamily residential building. The plan calls for 69 trees to be removed from the property. The city planners are still studying the issue and city council is open for public comment. You can view the site plan on the City of Lakewood [website](#).

A group of citizens concerned about the potential disturbance of habitat is encouraging neighbors and others to share their opinions by speaking out at Lakewood's city council meeting tonight, Monday October 9, at 7 P.M. The council meets at 480 S. Allison Parkway, across from the Lakewood Cultural Center. You can view the meeting agenda on the [city council website](#).

If you are unable to attend in person, you can view the meeting remotely (visit the agenda page for details).

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Fall migration is tapering off, but *The Lark Bunting* newsletter of Denver Field Ornithologists is right here. The new issue for November 2023 is now available on the DFO website at https://dfobirds.org/LB/2023/11_Nov_2023_LB.pdf. Inside, you'll find plenty of birding news, views and photos, including:

+ Smile and say "CHEEEP!": DFO's new photo feature with impromptu snaps of birders birding has candids from seven of our club's 24 September field trips. Our aim someday is 24 of 24. Enjoy these, and then start sending us YOUR shots from every October trip, OK?

Field Trips in Focus, pages 16-19

+ Best of the nests of Bear Creek: Our back-of-newsletter feature is **Anne Craig's** cool photo essay of Great Horned Owls in four different kinds of nests. *Last Word, Last Look, pages 27-33*

+ Lead-free ammo a lifeline for birds? Yes, and the sooner the better. DFO vice president **Matt Rodgers**, a birder *and* a hunter, explains why it's past time to retire bird-poisoning lead bullets and shot. *Page 23*

Plus: DFO's long-distance web wizard (688 miles away) wins the Ptarmigan Award . . . *In The Scope* features a new long-distance club member (1,316 miles away) . . . birding news updates on Chico Basin, Barr Lake and more . . . *From the President* on how to ditch the sod for bird-friendly plants in your yard . . . and much more!

Good last-of-autumn birding, everyone!

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

October 2023

NEW — Upcoming programs

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

- **MONTHLY PROGRAM — Water Flows Together: Opportunities for Birds and People in 2023**, by Abby Burk, Monday, October 23, 7 p.m. MDT via Zoom. [Register for the webinar](#).

Join Abby Burk of Audubon Rockies for an engaging October evening program about our state's freshwater ecosystems, current issues involving Colorado water, and what it all means for birds and people. Her talk comes in a pivotal year for water planning in Colorado. In January, the state water board released an updated Colorado Water Plan that highlights water conservation as a necessary starting point for meeting the state's water needs.

Burk is senior manager of the Western Rivers program for Audubon Rockies. In this role, she says she is "committed to advancing riparian habitat and stream resiliency through advocacy and action."

NOTE: The program originally scheduled for Oct. 23, Birding the Lower Rio Grande Valley, has been postponed until January 2024.

- **BIRD BOMBS: Colorado Sea Ducks**, by David Suddjian, Thursday, Oct 19, 7:00 p.m. MDT. Identification of our scoters and other ocean ducks. [Register for the webinar](#).
- **Archives**
Remember to check out the past Monthly Programs and Bird Bombs you may have missed by visiting the [Past Programs](#) page.

DUE — Upcoming field trips

This is only a small sample of trips coming up soon. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page for more information and additional upcoming field trips. These fill up fast.

- [Chatfield State Park](#) — Fri, Oct 20, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Chatfield is a great place to visit in mid-Fall, with colors turning and good birds possible. We will check for water birds from a few vantage points. This is a good time of year for a scoter, loon, Red-necked Grebe, jaeger or

even something more exciting. We will conclude with a simple potluck lunch. Leader: David Suddjian

- [Boulder County \(Patch Birding Trip\)](#) — Sun, Oct 22, 7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Explore some favorite Boulder County hotspots on this "patch birding" trip with our guest guide Courtney Rella (read more about Courtney and her patch below). We will visit a few locations, such as Waneka Lake, Hecla Lake, and the Coal Creek Trail. Leader: David Suddjian

- [Jackson Lake Reservoir](#) — Sat, Oct 28, 7:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Jackson Lake State Park offers a diversity of habitats. This trip will explore several different parts of the state park, expecting a variety of ducks, geese, gulls, as well as land birds. This is an all-day trip so bring lunch, snacks, plenty of water, and layer your clothing. Leaders: Donna Stumpp and Laura Steadman

DÉJÀ VU — Recent items for renewed awareness

- **For birds' sake, it's time to get the lead out of all hunting ammo**

More than 30 years since the lead ban for waterfowl hunting, lead remains legal in essentially all other forms of hunting and recreational shooting. Given that raptors routinely hunt and scavenge animals that have been wounded or killed with lead ammunition, the threat to them of lead poisoning remains constant. Learn more in November's edition of [The Lark Bunting](#), page 23.

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Hello Birders,

Fall migration is tapering off, but *The Lark Bunting* newsletter of Denver Field Ornithologists is still right here. The new issue for December 2023 is now available on the DFO website at https://dfobirds.org/LB/2023/12_Dec_2023_LB.pdf. Inside, you'll find plenty of birding news, views and photos, including:

- + **Everglading with Audubon:** Don't miss the final DFO monthly evening program of the year on **Monday, Nov. 27** with two of Miami-based Tropical Audubon's experts on the iconic "river of grass." And after the holidays, get ready for a January birding travelogue to the hotspots of Texas's Lower Rio Grande Valley with former DFO president **Tamie Bulow**. *Full details, pages 10-11*
 - + **One birder/photographer's BoCo summer:** Enjoy a photo gallery of member **John Salisbury**'s best shots of the season at several Boulder County locations, from a high-country Fox Sparrow to that most unexpected Colorado encore from a rare Limpkin. *Last Word, Last Look, pages 27-32*
 - + **Bluff Lake's Swainson's Hawks:** DFO trip leader **Jason Bidgood** spent this past breeding season around a family of hawks at Bluff Lake Nature Center, a great urban patch near where Denver jetliners landed and flew. Follow his account from nesting to fledging and beyond. *Conservation, pages 19-21*
 - + **Bird books to nestle with:** When you're not out birding this coming winter, DFO president **Sharon Tinianow** has suggestions for great winter reading on birds, wildlife, and the humans who love them. *From The President, page 5*
- Plus:** A final verdict on the birder-friendly ranch family that fought to remain caretakers of Chico Basin Ranch, one of Colorado's richest birdlife locales and a

favorite DFO destination . . . another gallery of DFO birders birding on some of October's 21 field trips . . . sign-up details on the upcoming Denver Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 16 . . . and plenty more news and photos.

Here's to a (Wild) Turkey Day for all and the start of winter birding, everyone!

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

November 2023

NEW — Upcoming programs and events

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

- **MONTHLY PROGRAM — Wildlife, Wetlands and the Everglades, by Lauren Jonaitis and Stephanie Clements. Monday, November 27, 7 PM MST.**

These are perilous times for the Everglades. On the Monday after Thanksgiving, DFO's final evening program of the season will explore the rich history and science of this vast, iconic landscape with two Everglades advocates from the [Tropical Audubon Society](https://tropicalaudubon.org) (<https://tropicalaudubon.org>) of Miami. "Wildlife, Wetlands and the Everglades" will feature Tropical Audubon Senior Conservation Director Lauren Jonaitis and Education and Advocacy Director Stephanie Clements.

- **Bird Bomb: Get Gull-able. Thursday, December 14, 7 pm mst.** Learn the basics of Gull ID.
- **Archives:** Remember to check out the past [Monthly Programs](#) and [Bird Bombs](#) you may have missed by visiting the [Past Programs](#) page.

DUE — Upcoming field trips

Here is a partial list of upcoming field trips. Visit the [Upcoming Field Trips](#) page soon to discover additional trips and sign up while space is still available.

- **Big Johnson Reservoir and Bluestem Prairie Open Space** — Fri, Nov 24, 8:00 am – 12:30 pm. Meet at Lowe's in Castle Rock near the outlet stores. Big Johnson is the best reservoir in the Colorado Springs area, and during migration and winter is teeming with ducks of many species, gulls, and sometimes loons and grebes.
- **Aurora Reservoir and Cherry Creek State Park (Developing Birder Trip).** Tue, Dec 5, 11:00 am – 4:30 pm. It is a good time of year for loons, scoters, rare gulls, Red-necked Grebe and Long-tailed Duck. We may see fun geese and raptors, too.
- **South Platte River Trail at E 88th Ave and I-76 (Developing Birder Trip).** Wed, Dec 6, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm. A walk along the South Platte will provide opportunities to enjoy large numbers of ducks with a good variety. We might see a Barrow's Goldeneye and other water birds such

as snipe or a night-heron.

- **Prewitt and Jackson Reservoirs. Sat, Dec 9, 5:30 am - 4:30 pm.** Meet at Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N. Broadway. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave. Let's go look for some geese! This full-day trip will visit Colorado's northeastern-most reservoirs to see what fun waterfowl, raptors, and winter songbirds are braving the cold. We will visit SWA and State Park land so make sure you have the appropriate passes.
- **Grand County. Tue, Dec 12, 7:30 am - 5:00 pm.** Meet at the Stegosaurus parking lot just south of I-70, exit 259. This trip focuses on fall/early winter migrating waterfowl, including Barrow's Goldeneye and other high mountain birds from Pine Grosbeaks and Crossbills to recently returned Rough-legged Hawks (and maybe N. American Otter)

DÉJÀ VU — Recent items for renewed awareness

- **DFO joins Colorado Gives: Make this December 5 a big day of extra giving**

This year, Denver Field Ornithologists has joined Colorado Gives, the nonprofit fundraising effort that provides grassroots donors an online directory of more than 1,600 charitable, nonprofit organizations across the state. As we count down to Colorado Gives Day in early December, consider giving an extra donation to DFO, and even sharing our Colorado Gives link with friends and family to increase the response. Learn more in the current edition of [The Lark Bunting](#), page 9. Or visit the [DFO Colorado Gives](#) page directly.

- **DFO: It's All of us**

Help keep DFO strong and your connection to Colorado birds and birding vital. Join DFO or renew your membership now before year's end. Visit the [membership](#) page for more information.

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

November 2023

Correction: Several members did not receive this Digest; this update is directed to those members.

NEW — Programs and events

IF YOU MISSED IT — November MONTHLY PROGRAM — Wildlife, Wetlands and the Everglades, by Lauren Jonaitis and Stephanie Clements

THE RECORDING of this program is now available online at DFO on the **Past Programs** page (<https://dfobirds.org/Programs/Past.aspx>).

Description: These are perilous times for the Everglades. On the Monday after Thanksgiving, DFO's final evening program of the season will explore the rich history and science of this vast, iconic landscape with two Everglades advocates from the [Tropical Audubon Society](https://tropicalaudubon.org) (<https://tropicalaudubon.org>) of Miami. "Wildlife, Wetlands and the Everglades" will feature Tropical Audubon Senior Conservation Director Lauren Jonaitis and Education and Advocacy Director Stephanie Clements.

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Winter's coming for real, so bundle up on the sofa or by fire and enjoy the new edition of *The Lark Bunting* newsletter of Denver Field Ornithologists. The January 2024 issue is now available on the DFO website at

https://dfobirds.org/LB/2024/01_Jan_2024_LB.pdf. Look what's Inside:

+ 2023 Photo Faves: When we asked members of DFO and of DFO's Facebook Group to share their best, favorite or most memorable bird pictures of the year, you responded with gorgeous photos aplenty. Check out our 12-page gallery as we say goodbye to 2023 and look forward to more great birds in the new year. *Last Word, Last Look, page 23*

+ Stamps of Approval: The Federal Duck Stamp isn't just for hunters, writes DFO vice president **Matt Rodgers** (a hunter AND a birder) — because 98% of the proceeds go to buying, restoring and improving wetlands habitat for all waterfowl (and the other birds and wildlife that live in our wetlands). Read this informative lesson in history and conservation, including cool Duck Stamp images. *Conservation, page 19*

+ Vat can Vee do Vor DFO?: Vee stands for VOLUNTEER, and DFO president **Sharon Tinianow** has a great list of ways YOU can help our all-volunteer club serve members and the field-tripping public better. *From The President, page 5*

Plus: Last chance to sign up for the **Denver Christmas Bird Count** on Dec. 16 . . . details on another **12-day dream DFO field trip** next May to southeastern Arizona's bird-rich "Sky Islands" (registration opens in mid-December) . . . More **Field Trips in Focus** glimpses from some of November's 22 DFO outings . . . details of the first two monthly **evening programs** for 2024 . . . and so much more.

Enjoy it all, let us know what you think of the new issue, and until next time, happy holiday birding, everyone!

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We truly appreciate your membership in DFO and hope you have enjoyed DFO's field trips, programs, and newsletter in 2023. December is a great time to renew your membership and continue your support and participation in the coming year. For your convenience, memberships can be renewed for up to three years.

While you're renewing your membership please consider supporting DFO with a gift to one of our dedicated funds. You can read about your options for donating on our website at [Donate to DFO \(dfobirds.org\)](https://dfobirds.org). To the extent it applies to your personal situation, donations to DFO are fully tax deductible.

This is also a great time to consider gift memberships for the people on your holiday gift list who enjoy birding.

Whether you want to renew, join, or purchase a gift membership, the DFO website, <https://dfobirds.org/> makes it easy. Go to the [Membership page](#) and you will be prompted to log in. The benefits of membership are outlined there, and you can make your selections. You can opt to pay electronically through PayPal (you can use a credit card without setting up a PayPal account) or send in a check.

Thanks in advance for being an important part of DFO!

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DFO Digest

Updates & Reminders

December 2023

NEW — Upcoming programs

Visit the [DFO Programs & Events page](#) for more information and to register.

- **MONTHLY PROGRAM** — Monday, January 22, 2024, 7 PM MST.

Birding the Lower Rio Grande Valley: Top Hotspots and More, by Tamie Bulow. [Register for the webinar](#).

Before moving to the Lower Rio Grande Valley to manage the South Padre Island Birding & Nature Center, former DFO president Tamie Bulow (2005-2007) worked as manager of conferences, conventions and tours for the Colorado-based American Birding Association. Now retired, Bulow lives in the border city of Harlingen, TX, but continues to dabble in birding work.

Bulow says she will reveal “five places that are a must visit” for birders, “and another 30 or 40 that won’t disappoint.” She also says there are 15-20 specialties that require you come to see them in the Rio Grande Valley: Birds like Great Kiskadee and Green Jay, Buff-bellied Hummingbird and Altamira Oriole, Grove-billed Ani and Green Kingfisher.

- **BIRD BOMBS — I Wish They All Could Be California Gulls:** Jan 11, 2024, Thursday, 7:00 PM. Identification of Colorado gulls. [Register for the webinar](#).
- **ARCHIVES** — Remember to check out the past Monthly Programs and Bird Bombs you may have missed by visiting the [Past Programs](#) page.

DUE — Upcoming field trips

- [Stearns Lake](#) — Tue, Dec 26, 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Stearns Lake is a lovely lake situated in the Carolyn Holmberg preserve in both Boulder and Broomfield counties. We will bird the lake and open space areas, likely to see the resident bald eagle pair along with other raptors, waterfowl and passerines.

- [Chatfield State Park](#) — Tue, Dec 26, 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM

A morning outing to explore winter birds on the reservoir. Chatfield has open water as of Dec 22 and may remain open water still on Dec 26. Some interesting species that have been lingering may still be here to enjoy, and other birds may appear if following a storm in the days before. This is a good time for uncommon to rare gulls. You never know what will show up at Chatfield.

- [Cherry Creek State Park](#) (Arapahoe County) — Fri, Dec 29, 12:30 - 4:30 PM

An afternoon visit to enjoy the birds at Cherry Creek SP, hopefully with nice viewing conditions in the afternoon light. This is a good time for interesting gulls, geese and other water birds. Many hundreds of Common Mergansers may be present, plus eagles and other raptors.

- [Ken Caryl Valley Area](#) — Sat, Jan 6, 4:30 – 6:30 AM

This special trip will try for Northern Saw-whet Owl down among the hogbacks. We have a good chance to hear Saw-whet, and we might see one.

- [Lakewood Bear Creek Greenbelt Park](#) (Developing Birder Trip) — Sat, Jan 13, 1:00-4:00 PM

Let's have a winter afternoon exploration of two or three places in Lakewood, including a stop at the Bear Creek Greenbelt. We will try to find some winter variety as best we can, looking for waterfowl where there is open water, and for birds along Bear Creek. We might see American Dipper, Hooded Merganser, Wood Duck and other ducks and geese, Belted Kingfisher, and maybe a Great Horned Owl.

DÉJÀ VU — Recent items for renewed awareness

- [Join or renew](#). There is still time to renew your DFO membership before it expires Dec 31, 2023.
- [Merch Gifts](#). Looking for a great gift? Check out our Zazzle store.
- [Donate to DFO](#) so we can keep the good work going.
- [Volunteer](#) (page 5 of the January Lark Bunting) Consider joining our volunteer ranks in 2024 so Denver Field Ornithologists can keep doing what we do so well. A look-ahead to the DFO volunteer opportunities (and some urgent needs) we have for the coming year:
 - COMMITTEE WORK
 - FIELD TRIPS
 - HAWK WATCH
 - DFO BOARD AND OFFICERS
 - MORE VOLUNTEER ROLES
 - URGENT VOLUNTEER NEEDS

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